

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Per 23CFR771.130, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is circulating this Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the US-31 Kokomo Corridor project (SDEIS) to seek public and agency comments on changes made to Alternative J in response to comments focused on enhanced local access and minimization of environmental impacts. The changes between Alternative J and Alternative J Modified are discussed in Section 3.2 and illustrated in Figure 3.3. The primary change involves the addition of a new interchange at Touby Pike that was not discussed in the DEIS to provide enhanced access to the Kokomo Municipal Airport, planned Haynes High Tech Industrial Park, and overall northern portion of the project.

This was prepared in accordance with *Indiana's Streamlined EIS Procedures* (FHWA, Indiana Division, July 6, 2001). The US 31 Kokomo Corridor Project is located primarily in Howard County, Indiana. The project's south-north limits are located two miles south of State Road (SR) 26 and one mile north of the US Route (US) 35 northern junction (County Road 450 North), respectively, a distance of approximately 12 miles. The project corridor traverses the City of Kokomo and Center Township, as well as portions of Clay, Howard, Taylor, and Harrison Townships in Howard County. One mile of the project extends into Prairie and Liberty Townships in northern Tipton County. This segment of US 31 is considered to have "independent utility" because both roadway characteristics and regional traffic patterns change outside the project limits.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the US 31 Kokomo Corridor Project was published on April 1, 2005. A No-Action Alternative and five build alternatives (Alternatives E, F, G, I, and J) were studied in detail for impacts to the human and natural environments as part of the DEIS. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) issued a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the DEIS on April 8, 2005 (ER-FRL-6662-2, *Federal Register*, Vol. 70, No. 67). A formal public hearing for the project was subsequently held on April 19, 2005. The 45-day comment period on the DEIS closed on May 23, 2005.

Based on public and agency comments offered as part of the 45-day comment period, modifications were made to Alternative J as it was described in the DEIS, resulting in the creation of Alternative J Modified. These modifications were made in order to reduce the environmental impacts and improve local access to and ensure the long term safety of the roadway. These changes include a shift of the middle segment of the alternative, an additional interchange with Touby Pike, and revisions to the geometry of the northern interchange with US 31. This alternative was subsequently identified as the project's preferred alternative. This SDEIS was prepared to document and evaluate the potential impacts of Alternative J Modified on the human and natural environment. Much of the information provided in the DEIS is still valid and accurate and, therefore, is not repeated in the SDEIS. Where appropriate, information from the DEIS is referred to or summarized to assist in the discussion of Alternative J Modified in this document.